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a computer-readable storage which contains server selection information for selecting a link related to a location in a memory device where encoded media data is stored on one of a plurality of media servers, said processor operative to select one of said media servers in which to establish a data communication connection based upon said server selection information and establish a data communication connection with said selected media server via a communications network, said media data buffer operative to receive media data from said location in the memory device on said selected media server, and said processor operative to decode said received encoded media data during receipt thereof.

2. The media receiver described in Claim 1 wherein said media data includes streamed video data in packet format.

3. The media receiver described in Claim 1 wherein said media data includes streamed audio data in packet format.

4. (Amended) The media receiver described in Claim 1 wherein said server selection information includes data relating to a compression of the media data from the media servers.

5. The media receiver described in Claim 4 wherein said server selection information includes data relating to the locations within a computer-readable storage of said media servers.

6. The media receiver described in Claim 5 wherein said processor is operative to transmit server selection information includes an address representing a location of said media receiving system to said selected media server.

7. The media receiver described in Claim 1 further comprising an input device to indicate server selection information including the location where media data is stored on one of the media servers.

b1 8. The media receiver described in Claim 1 wherein said processor is operative to regulate the media data being received from the selected media server using TCP/IP.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Cancelled)

16. (Twice Amended) A method of dynamically allocating a server/client device pair, said method comprising the steps of:

storing in a server media data at different compression rates;

transferring the media data at a first compression rate over a communications link between the server and the client device;

receiving information from the client device indicating to change the compression rate of the media data transferred over the communication link; and

transferring the media data with a second compression rate from the server to the client device in response to receiving said information.

17. (Twice Amended) The method as described in Claim 16, wherein said server communicates audio data and said client device comprises a standard PC.

18. (Twice Amended) A media communication system comprising:
a proximate server capable of communicating with a media server and with a client device via a communications network, said media server including a computer-readable storage containing a set of media data; and

said proximate server operative to receive a data packet including a request message transmitted from said client device via the communications network, said request message indicating a request for data included in said set of media data, said proximate server operative to respond to said request message to issue a request to said media server for data in said set of media data, said proximate server operative to receive a portion of said data in said set of media data and transmit said portion of said data to said client device.

19. (Amended) The media communication system as described in Claim 18, wherein said proximate server sends said portion of said data to said client device before said proximate server receives all of said data in said set of media data.

20. The media communication system as described in Claim 19, wherein said portion of said data in said set of media data includes audio data.

21. The media communication system as described in Claim 19, wherein said portion of said data in said set of media data includes video data.

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Amended) A client device for requesting and receiving a data file from at least one server via a computer network, the client device comprising:

a receiver connected to said computer network and operative to receive the data file having a compression scheme;

server selection module for selecting one of said servers, said server selection apparatus comprising:

quality monitoring module operative to monitor the error rate or bandwidth of the communication link between said client device and the at least one server, and

selection module operative to transmit an indication to the at least one server to change the compression of the data file as a result of monitoring the errors or bandwidth of the communication link; and

media data receiver operative to receive the data file from the at least one server at a different compression scheme.

30. (Amended) A method of receiving encoded media data file comprising:
selecting with a client computer a link related to a location or address where the encoded media data file is stored in a memory device on one of a plurality of media servers;
establishing, as a result of the selection, a data communication connection over a communications network with the one media servers;
receiving over the communications network the encoded media data file from said location or address on the one media server; and
decoding at least a portion of the received encoded media data file during the receiving of the media data file.
31. (Amended) The method described in Claim 30 wherein said encoded media data file includes compressed audio data in a packet format, and wherein the method further comprises playing at least a portion of the received encoded media data file by the client computer when receiving the media data file.
32. (Amended) The method described in Claim 30 wherein said encoded media data file includes streamed audio data in packet format.
33. (Amended) The method described in Claim 30 wherein said server selection information includes data relating to the bandwidth or a compression rate needed to transmit media data from at least one of said media servers.
34. The method described in Claim 30 further comprising displaying with the link data relating to an audio clip and/or a video clip stored on at least one of the media servers.
35. (Amended) The method described in Claim 30 further comprising:
receiving the encoded media data with a receiver; and
transmitting an address representing a location of said receiver to the selected media server.

36. (Amended) The method as described in Claim 30 further comprising indicating the location where media data file is stored on one of the media servers using an input device.

37. (Amended) The method described in Claim 31 further comprising regulating the media data file being received from the selected media server using TCP/IP protocol.

38. (Amended) A computer readable medium having instructions in a single media player application when executed by a processor comprise:
indicating a link selection related to a location where encoded media data is stored in a memory on one of a plurality of media servers;
establishing, in response to the link selection, a data communication connection via a communications link with the one media server;
receiving the encoded media data from said location on said one media server;
and
decoding the received encoded media data.

39. (Amended) The computer readable medium described in Claim 38 wherein said media data includes streamed video data.

40. (Amended) The computer readable medium described in Claim 38 wherein said media data includes audio data, and wherein the instructions in the media player application when executed by a processor further comprise decoding and playing at least a portion of the audio data in the encoded media data during the receipt thereof.

41. (Amended) The computer readable medium described in Claim 38 wherein said encoded media data has a compression rate, and wherein server selection information includes data relating to the compression rate of the media data from each of said media servers.